Cemex's Jeff Bobolts says US aggregates demand is expected to grow steadily, led by infrastructure and non-building construction.

Images: Cemex US

A vital component

Cemex US senior vice president of aggregates Jeff Bobolts explains how the building materials provider has expanded its US aggregates business through investments and joint ventures.

Jeff Bobolts is responsible for all aspects of Cemex's US aggregates business, including production, sales and technical services and has served on the board of directors for the Florida Concrete & Products Association and is currently serving on the board of directors for the Florida Limerock & Aggregates Institute.

He spoke to *Aggregates Business* about Cemex US's plans for its wider US operations and how the experienced executive sees the future of one of the world's biggest quarrying and aggregates markets.

Cemex US senior vice president of aggregates Jeff Bobolts.

***Aggregate Business*: What is the strategic importance of Cemex US's aggregate business in its overall operations?**

Jeff Bobolts: Cemex's aggregates business line plays a central role in the company's integrated model. We are the sixth largest aggregate business in the US and contribute 40 per cent of Cemex's EBITDA (Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation, and Amortisation).

Aggregates are strategically critical because they support both external sales and internal supply to our downstream businesses. Our high-quality acreage of aggregate reserves helps optimise cost and delivery performance across the value chain.

We have expanded our US aggregates footprint through investments and joint ventures, including our partnership with Couch Aggregates, to increase capacity in high-growth regions. This aligns with broader corporate goals to increase the US share of EBITDA and focus capital on markets with attractive long-term fundamentals.

AB: As the senior executive in aggregates at Cemex US, what are your objectives in the role?

JB: Our team works every day to strengthen Cemex's aggregates business in the US and position us for durable, long term growth.

Aggregates are fundamental to construction, so the role spans both strategic direction and operational leadership.

First and foremost, safety is a strategic priority at Cemex US. Our goal is zero injuries, and we continue to reinforce a culture in which every employee and contractor returns home safely every day.

From a business perspective, our focus is on disciplined growth - managing reserves acreage, improving vertical integration with our ready-mix and cement businesses and investing in assets that strengthen our footprint in the US.

This includes organic growth, operational excellence and selective mergers and acquisitions in markets with long-term demand, aligned with our capital allocation strategy.

AB: What are the current market conditions in the US, in terms of demand for Cemex aggregates products?

JB: Near-term US aggregates demand has been softer than normal, with higher interest rates slowing residential construction and public projects moving later than expected. 2025 was a normalisation year, and Cemex's strategy of commercial and operational excellence helped offset the impact of lower volumes.

That said, medium- and long-term fundamentals remain solid. Infrastructure investment is a major demand driver, particularly under the 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIIA/IIJA), which continues to fund highways, bridges, ports and other projects that are aggregates-intensive. Federal agencies such as the US Department of Transportation (USDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) plan these projects to ensure secure, long-term access to crushed stone, sand and gravel. Cemex states are expected to outperform the US average in this segment moving forward.

Residential and commercial construction remain important contributors, even as housing starts to fluctuate with interest rates.

Non-building construction, including logistics hubs, industrial parks and public works, provides a stabilising base of demand for aggregates used in a variety of concrete and soil stabilisation applications.

AB: What are the major growth opportunities for the Cemex aggregates business in the US?

JB: The most compelling growth opportunities fall into four areas.

First is infrastructure-led demand, particularly transportation and projects funded by federal and state programs.

Crushed stone remains the backbone of these projects, and the availability of aggregates is critical to execution.

Second is vertical integration. Supplying our own aggregates into ready-mix and concrete operations improves cost control, reliability and margins while reducing exposure to third-party supply constraints.

Third is operational excellence. Focusing on aggregate-specific key performance indicators and developing improvement plans around those, on a quarry-by-quarry basis, provides substantial upside for the business.

This process operates in two ways, by benchmarking similar quarries to each other and then measuring an individual quarry against its full potential.

Finally, digitalisation. From quarry automation to data-driven logistics, we can extract more value from existing assets, improve service levels, and operate more efficiently.

AB: Do you think the critical importance of aggregates is fully recognised by US authorities?

JB: Yes. While aggregates may not always make headlines, their importance is clearly understood by the administration, US policymakers and infrastructure agencies.

At the federal level, aggregates are embedded in infrastructure planning.

The IIJA implicitly depends on a secure aggregate supply to deliver roads, bridges, airports, ports and flood control projects. Agencies such as USDOT, FHWA and the US Army Corps of Engineers routinely plan assuming local access to aggregates.

Aggregates are also recognised as essential mineral commodities by the US Geological Survey, which tracks production, reserves, and supply risks, as disruptions would directly affect economic development and national resilience.

Finally, disaster recovery underscores its importance. After hurricanes, floods or wildfires, aggregates are among the first materials mobilised for emergency repairs, and authorities often expedite permits to ensure local supply.

AB: In 2024, Cemex said the US is core to its long-term strategy. Why, and how has that impacted the business?

JB: The US offers scale, transparency and long-term demand unmatched by many markets.

Large federal infrastructure programs, steady industrial activity and urbanisation trends make it one of the most attractive regions for long-term capital deployment.

Following the divestment of non-core assets, Cemex redirected capital toward the US to improve returns and strengthen operational focus.

This has translated into investments in aggregates capacity, digital capabilities and sustainability initiatives aligned with customer and regulatory expectations.

Are there regional differences in materials demand across the US?

Yes. Demand varies by region depending on infrastructure priorities, population growth and industrial investment. Texas, the southeast and parts of the southwest, see strong demand tied to population growth and logistics infrastructure, while coastal states often have higher recycled aggregate usage driven by permitting constraints and sustainability policies.

What technologies are impacting Cemex US's aggregates business?

The aggregates industry is advancing capabilities through digital transformation.

There are many effective, off-the-shelf platforms that apply artificial intelligence to mine planning, mobile equipment productivity and automation, fixed plant maintenance, loadout, logistics and commercial analytics.

Cemex is currently executing its digital roadmap, prioritising digital tools to enable our teams to make better decisions, faster.

How do you see the future for Cemex in the US aggregates sector?

With long-life reserves, modernised quarry operations and integrated supply across cement and ready-mix, Cemex is well-positioned to serve the next decade of US construction growth. AB